

3. Malik son of Sanan had such a horror of begging that once he went without food for three days together, but never condescended to ask any one to give him food.

STORY 18.

THE IDEAL OF SELF-DENIAL IN ISLAM.

ONE distinguishing feature of Islam is this that a Muslim is taught to put the needs of others before his own. He will feed the hungry and himself remain without food. He will clothe the naked and himself go without clothes. This teaching which reaches the high water-mark of practical love was very commonly practised by the early Muslims when the example of the Prophet was still fresh in their memory. Even in these days God-fearing Muslims practise this virtue to a large extent.

1. Once a certain man paid a visit to the Prophet. It so happened that in the house of the Prophet there was nothing but water. "Which of you will entertain this guest of mine?" said the Prophet. One of those present offered his services. He took the guest home and inquired of his wife if there was anything in the house to be laid before the guest. "There is food only for the children in some way or other." Replied he, "when the food is placed before the guest, put out the light. I will make him believe by the motion of my lips that I am sharing the meal with him". The wife did as she was told and thus was the Prophet's guest entertained.
2. In a certain engagement, Akrima, Haris son of Hisham and Suhail son of Omar received